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BULLETIN OF SMITH COLLEGE
HILLYER ART GALLERY

MARCH 30, 1923

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TORSO OF EROS

marble

purchased 1922

Greek, type of IV century

BULLETIN OF SMITH COLLEGE
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A MARBLE TORSO

According to an early Greek poet Eros is one of the elder race of gods, coeval with Earth, and older by far than Zeus himself. Perhaps it was some such primal Eros who was worshipped at Thespieae, where Phryne, it is said, dedicated a statue of the god by Praxiteles. But in general there was not much formal devotion to Eros. The Greeks were too well aware that he was little more than a personification of a human passion, and he did not achieve that objective existence which, thanks to numerous cults, legends, and poems, was attained by most of the Greek gods. Eros was the youthful companion and attendant of Aphrodite, and so far as he was thought to possess a personality, may often have been held to be her son. But that the popular notion of the god was fluid and adaptable is evident in art from the ease with which his form is duplicated and multiplied. In the superb vase-painting of the Judgment of Paris, drawn by Macron in the pottery of Hieron, the veiled Aphrodite, clad in the delicate and shimmering fabric of Ionia, is accompanied by a troop of hovering Erotes. So, too, the Aphrodite who so often figures as the support of a bronze mirror is regularly attended by two Erotes, daintily poised between her shoulders and the polished disc.

This very vagueness in the early conception of Eros accounts for the fact that he does not actually appear in art until the beginning of the fifth century B. C., long after the conventional types of the other Greek gods have been established. When he does appear, it is with a singularity which is no less significant because through custom it has come to seem natural and inevitable: he has wings. The winged human form in early Greek art is often associated with a Gorgon or some other figure of fear, and it has been suggested that the wings of Eros, in spite of his generally beautiful and gracious aspect, preserve a hint of his daemonic power over the hearts of men. ⁽¹⁾

On the much-discussed relief in Boston, the companion-piece of the Ludovisi relief in Rome, Eros is no trifler, but weighs in the

(1) Furtwängler, in Roscher, *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, s. v. *Eros*.

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balance the issues of life. The theme is treated with the seriousness and the slightly austere and hieratic grace natural to the generation which heard for the first time the choruses of Aeschylus, and saw the walls of Athenian porticoes decorated with the noble figures of Polygnotus.

Although the lighter aspects of the god's imagined character and activities were abundantly recognized in fifth century art, his form continued through the classic period to be that of a youth of mature proportions, though often shown on a smaller scale than that of his associates. This is partly due to the universal enthusiasm of the period for the "ephebe", the youth of eighteen or thereabouts, and in part to the fact that though the Greek imagination, dwelling on the caprice of the god, may early have thought of him as a child, children were not correctly drawn and modelled in Greek art until a later period. The posture of Eros on the Parthenon frieze is that of a child, comfortably leaning on the knee of Aphrodite in the shade of her parasol, and watching the on-coming procession of Athenians. But his form is that of a well-grown boy.

To the art of the fourth century and of the Hellenistic age Eros, as a half allegorical figure, capable of fanciful treatment, was a congenial subject. Praxiteles made at least two famous statues of the god. No copy of either can be certainly identified. We can only look at the Hermes or the Apollo Sauroctonos, and guess at the easy rhythm of attitude, the sure harmony of modelling, and the expression of smiling revery which an Eros by Praxiteles may probably have had.

At the end of the fourth century the conception of Eros as a whimsical and mischievous child came to dominate the imagination of poets and artists. From that time on he became younger and younger, until in the Roman period he ended as a baby, frequently masquerading in the dress and occupations of grown-ups, with humorous effect.

The torso of Eros illustrated in this bulletin, and now a part of the permanent collection of the Hillyer Art Gallery, belongs to a type which was probably created at the end of the fourth century B. C., early in that inverted evolution towards childhood which we have traced. It is apparently of Greek marble, and is of somewhat less than life size. The place of its original discovery is not known. It belonged successively to two private collectors in Germany before it came into the possession of Smith College.

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If the whole figure had survived, it would undoubtedly show the god, here represented as a boy of some twelve years, adjusting the string of his bow. Of the group of statues which illustrate this motive, perhaps the most beautiful is that in the Capitoline Museum in Rome.⁽²⁾ The Capitoline Eros, in a posture of great elasticity and grace, holds the bow in the left hand, with the lower end near his right knee, while he fastens the string at the upper end. The nervous action and the evident mobility of the figure, as well as some characteristics of proportion and modelling have led archaeologists to conjecture that the statue in Rome is copied from a work of Lysippus. But it is possible that it is a somewhat later creation of his school. The representation of the god of love with a bow is characteristic of the spirit of Greek art in its later phases, and is not to be taken too seriously. His arrows are metaphorical arrows, and the wounds they inflict are not very deep.

Although the motive of the Eros of the Hillyer gallery is the same, its attitude is somewhat different. It exemplifies a variation of the type already known in a somewhat more completely preserved statue in the British Museum.⁽³⁾ Here Eros seems to rest one end of the bow on the ground, a little in front of the figure. The body is lightly poised, with the weight mainly on the left foot, but probably not without that suggestion of the easy shifting of weight from side to side found in works of the school of Lysippus. The left hand perhaps held the bow near its upper end, while the right hand was busied with the string. It has been suggested⁽⁴⁾ that this pose is due to the transference of the motive to the technique of marble, since it brings the contours within the ordinary limits of a statuary composition, diminishing the mechanical difficulty of balancing the figure, and economizing material. It is less dramatic and more self-contained than the Capitoline figure, admitting, with the natural bending forward of the body, a graceful and pleasing composition, evident in some profile and back views as well as the front view for which the figure was chiefly designed.

The modelling of the body is soft and unathletic, as might be expected. It retains a quality of surface which gives pleasure in spite of discoloration and minor injuries. The back is somewhat more summarily treated than the front, and it will be noted that

(2) For a convenient list of statues of Eros with the bow, see Klein, *Praxiteles*, pp. 230-231.

(3) British Museum, Catalogue of Greek Sculpture, III, No. 1674.

(4) Klein, *Praxiteles*, p. 230, note.

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TORSO OF EROS

back view

the feathers of the wings are finished only on those sides which would be apparent in a profile view of the figure. It is presumably the work of a Greek hand, guided by the tradition of the fourth century B. C. Aside from the conventional wings, it illustrates the consistent tendency of Greek art to seek the fulfilment of its

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ideals in the representation of rational, healthful, and unexaggerated human forms. It reflects upon the gallery "un rayon lointain du génie grec, de ce génie épris de beauté plastique, mais aussi de loyauté intellectuelle, qui nous a enseigné le culte de la raison et le fera prévaloir un jour".⁽⁵⁾

S. N. D.

NOTE: The illustrations in this article are from photographs made by Mr. Kennedy, whose work in the photography of sculpture has aroused attention both in this country and abroad.

COLLEGE MUSEUM POLICY

In the early phase of our life as a museum, effort was concentrated on American painting. Indeed we had, until 1911, not a single original work outside this field—not a bronze or a marble, not even a print. The limited funds at disposal made such concentration seem advisable, and President Seelye was convinced of the importance of building up an American collection. He used to visit the artists in their studios, stating his purpose and asking their coöperation. He informed them frankly that his funds were small and invited their assistance in the interest of education. An American collection, in a college, was a new idea. The artists responded generously. The result was a unique assemblage of paintings, with works of high value at small outlays. There are pictures in the collection which would today bring ten times what they cost. Our Albert Ryder would probably command twenty times the price paid to the artist by our first president. . . And as a consequence of this policy, American painting of the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century, was finely, if not fully represented.

A few years ago the aim of the museum might well have seemed to be achieved. But within the decade the problem has changed considerably. The growing interest of the public, as well as of the student body, the expansion of courses in art and the large increase in the numbers of students electing them (there are now 363 of these) have brought new conditions and new needs. The old plan has begun to seem too exclusive. One may admire American painting very much and still not feel like confining his art study to it. Take a parallel case: suppose one were studying

(5) Reinach, *Répertoire de la statuaire*, IV, p. ix.

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(or teaching) the history of English literature and could get no books but American ones of the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century—... To put the question is to answer it.

The pressing need was of original works in the various fields of study. For the misery of art teaching is the lack of original material. Photographs are poor substitutes.

The desideratum for us, as for any institution of higher learning, is to be able to illustrate the history of civilization through works of art. And it should still be possible to acquire a series of examples covering at least those phases of culture from which our own has been derived. Starting with Egypt and following the main stream of European civilization to the present, one would naturally emphasize the Greek, the Gothic, and the Renaissance periods. Far Eastern art may or not be "just as great as the Greek"; it is of less immediate importance *to us*. And unless we have the wealth of Ormus we shall be compelled to draw the line somewhere.

The perfect thing would be for each main period to have a cabinet to itself with nothing in it which does not belong there and so arranged as to give something of the local color and atmosphere of the period. Toward this ideal we have been able to make as yet only a modest and hesitating advance. But we have taken the first step in our "Gothic cabinet".

In addition to the general plan just outlined, it would seem desirable that a college museum should specialize to a certain extent within some appropriate field. Concentration lends character; and it is heartening to feel the possibility of a certain degree of completeness in some restricted portion of the immeasurable realm of art.

The field we incline to choose for ourselves at Smith College is modern art—American and French; American art because we are after all, Americans, and because we have already so favorable a representation in that field; and French art—?

Well, because French art is the most important art of the nineteenth century, as German music is the most important music; and because the aesthetic evolution of modern Europe (classicism, romanticism and the rest) as well as its philosophical and social basis, can be traced more clearly and with greater profit in French art than in any other; and because furthermore modern American art derives from the French and is unexplained, from the historical point of view, without it; and again because we have made a favorable start in this field also, already possessing

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examples of some of the great masters—Géricault, Delacroix, Rousseau, Courbet, Rodin. . . . And there are other reasons still—but with these it is not desirable to weary the reader.

A. V. C.

THE COLLECTION OF CERAMICS



Jar, green glazed pottery

Chinese. Han period B.C. 202-221 A. D.
purchased 1922

The ceramics collection, like most of those in the Hillyer Gallery, was formally begun by a gift. In 1912, Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus of Chicago presented a group of one hundred pieces of American and English china and earthenware illustrating the more usual types produced between 1770 and 1830. Later gifts from Dr. Gunsaulus included Bohemian, Venetian and English glass as well as china and pottery of the period already represented. In the years 1913 to 1918 Mr. Charles L. Freer gave us a number of choice specimens of Chinese and Japanese

porcelain and pottery. Except for gifts of single pieces and occasional purchases, no additions have been made to the collection, which now numbers 276 pieces.

In 1920 the Department of Greek Archaeology lent a group of about sixty specimens of Egyptian pottery. This was originally a gift to them from the Egyptian Exploration Fund and represents all the common types from prehistoric times to the Ptolemaic era.

With the purchase of the Han covered jar, illustrated above, the gift of a T'ang mortuary figurine, and the purchase in 1922 of a Sung stone-ware jar, the group of Asiatic ceramics begins to assume an orderly air, for we have several Ming pieces as well as a number of T'zing. The Japanese group while numerically larger than the Chinese, is not so representative, but includes several signed pieces of the 17th century. Many of these Japanese pots are the gifts of Mr. Tryon, our constant friend and patron.

The collection of American and English china and earthenware has become fairly representative of the period between 1770

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and 1830 and includes examples of Wedgewood, Worcester, Rockingham, E. Wood, Lowestoft, Leeds, Bennington, Nantgarw and many others. Every addition to the collection is of value as it fills a gap somewhere,—for the gaps are many and varied. The general public shows a great interest in this group and our visitors recognize constantly “Aunt Sarah’s cups” or “great-grandmother’s teapot” among the pieces on display. It is just such recognition that arouses through surprised pride a sense of the aesthetic value of common things.

The significance of ceramics is two-fold: first, it affords an avenue of approach to those whose interest in painting and sculpture is negative; and second, in the words of a distinguished scholar: “the little things produced under necessity and for use often concentrate in themselves the especial beauties and characteristics of the design of a given age”.

E. K.

LIST OF MEMBERS 1922-1923

Life

Helen Hills Hills (Mrs. J. M.) 1908 Alice Orme Smith 1913

Sustaining Members

Josephine Jenks 1922 Mabel C. Mead 1901

Annual Members

Ruth S. Baldwin (Mrs. William H.) 1887	Beulah G. Hardy (Mrs. Thornton S.)
Maud S. Barber (Mrs. Earl H.) 1906	Mrs. Mary K. Howes
Josephine Cannon 1925	Susan R. Knox 1893
Adelaide Clouting 1921	Edith L. Parmelee
Elsa P. Haerle (Mrs. Louis) 1921	Martha Wilson 1895
Albertine F. Valentine (Mrs. Joseph L.) 1897	

A NOTE ON A GIFT OF PHOTOGRAPHS

The recent gift by Mr. James Loeb of Murnau, Staffelsee, Bavaria, of four hundred photographs of Greek Sculpture deserves more than mere mention. The photographs were taken under the direction of Professor Noack of the University of Berlin from casts in the National Museum. They are of especial value to the student as they show the sculpture from unusual points of view and under special conditions of light which disclose quite unexpected qualities. The gift is a great permanent addition to the educational material of the Department of Art.

C. K.

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ACCESSIONS FROM MARCH 1ST 1922 TO MARCH 1ST 1923

BOOKS	Cézanne und seine Ahnen; Durer;	Gift of Stephan Bourgeois
	Catalogue of the Kelekian Collection	Gift of D. K. Kelekian
CERAMICS	Rice bowl, crackle, polychrome decoration, Japanese 17th century (?)	Gift of D. W. Tryon
	Cylindrical miniature vase, Satsuma, Japanese, 19th century	Gift of Clara D. Loomis 1900
	Incense burner, Banko ware, Japanese, 18th century; rice bowl, green glazed pottery, Japanese, modern; red clay pot, unglazed, Chinese, modern; stone ware jar with four handles, Chinese, Sung period; two roof tile figures, glazed pottery, polychrome, Chinese, late Ming period; pillow, glazed pottery, polychrome, Japanese, 18th century (?); olla, black Santa Clara pottery, American Indian, modern; small jar, black Santa Clara pottery, American Indian; decorated jar, black Santa Clara pottery, American Indian, modern	Purchases
METAL WORK AND COINS	Woman's armlet, bronze, Etruscan, 6th century B. C.	Gift of Joseph Brummer
	Thirteen coins, copper, Chinese, B. C. 220-1911 A. D.	Gift of Ginling College
	Pencase, bronze, Japanese, 17th century (?); winepot, pewter, Chinese, Ch'ien-lung period; Fu dog with pearl, bronze, Japanese, modern; "spider" candle-stick, bronze, Japanese, modern	Purchases
MISCELLANEOUS	Two inscribed clay tablets, Babylonian	Gift of Ethel W. Chase 1902
	Bell pull, wool embroidery and bead work, German, 18th century	Gift of Elsa P. Haerle (Mrs. Louis) 1921
	Two rice bowls, decorated horn, Chinese, modern (?); netsuke, ivory, Japanese, 18th century (?); pair steatite seals, Chinese, Ming period; pair steatite seals surmounted with Fu dogs, Chinese, Ming period; steatite seal, Chinese, Ming period	Purchases
	Lacquer panel, Hiomeji Castle	Gift of Clara A. Converse, 1883
PAINTING	"Larkspur" by Woodhull Adams, oil on canvas	Gift of Mrs. Woodhull Adams
	Landscape, Chinese, Sung type, water color on paper	Gift of Ginling College
	Soldier with sword, Japanese, modern, water color on paper; A Cross Country Run, by Jean-Louis-André-Théodore Géricault, oil on canvas; Cows in a Stable by Pierre-Etienne-Théodore Rousseau, oil on canvas	Purchases
PRINTS	Etching, Anthony van Dyck; Adam van Noort	Gift of the Senior Members of the Studio Club

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Etching, Anthony van Dyck: Johannes de Wael.....	Gift of Ethel W. Chase 1902
Wood block print, Hokusai, surimono, Japanese 18th century.....	Gift of Clara D. Loomis 1900
Lithographs, Delacroix, four illustrations to Faust; etching, Delacroix: Juive d'Alger; etching, Delacroix: Etude de Femme, vue de dos; aquatint, Delacroix: Un Forgeron; lithograph, Delacroix: Cheval sauvage; lithograph, J. Laurens, after Delacroix: le bon Samaritain; etching, Rousseau: Chênes de Roches; etching, J. F. Millet: Woman feeding a Child; lithograph, Géricault: Boy feeding a Horse; lithograph, Géricault: Leaving the Stable; wood block print, Toyokuni I: Girl writing a Letter, Japanese, 19th century.....	Purchases
SCULPTURE.....Torso of a Woman, by Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Kunststein; doves in a pine tree, decorative panel, wood, polychrome, Japanese, modern; Buddha, Japanese, 18th century (?) lacquer on wood; elephant, Chinese, late Ming period, lacquer on wood; Fu dog, Chinese, late Ming period, lacquer on wood; flat panel with a cow, stone, polychrome, Chinese, modern	Purchases
TEXTILES.....One piece silk and metal thread brocade, ecclesiastical design, Byzantine, late 15th century...	Gift of Stephan Bourgeois
Four pieces silk brocade, Persian, 15th to 17th centuries; two pieces, tapestry 10th to 12th centuries, Coptic; "Senna" Khilim rug, Asia Minor early 19th century.....	Purchases
WOODWORK AND FURNITURE....Coffret, wood covered with leather embossed in bands, Italian, 16th century (?).....	Purchase
ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL.....371 halftones, 9 color prints, 4 engravings, 13 photographs, 3 pamphlets, 1 photogravure, 2 clippings.....	Gift of Dan Fellows Platt
545 photographs, 89 halftones, 13 color prints, 26 photogravures, 2 engravings, 60 pamphlets, clippings, MS material, bibliographies, from the collection of Una Macmahon Harkness (Mrs. F. E.) 1894.....	Gift of Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Harkness
400 photographs of Greek Sculpture...	Gift of Mr. James Loeb
23 photographs from the estate of F. B. Smith.....	Gift of Worcester Art Museum
One photograph.....	Gift of Mr. Schevill
One photograph.....	Gift of George B. Zug
Ten photographs.....	Gift of H. Siddons Mowbray
Two photographs.....	Gift of Braun Clément et Cie
Two slides.....	Gift of Sebah et Joaillier
1128 photographs and color prints, 553 slides.....	Purchases

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HILLYER ART GALLERY

THE DEPARTMENT OF ART SMITH COLLEGE

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BEULAH STRONG

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THE HILLYER ART GALLERY

Director ALFRED V. CHURCHILL
Assistant ELIZABETH KIMBALL
Curator of Books and Photographs
GLADYS I. PAGE

HOURS OF ADMISSION

During the college year, exclusive of the Christmas and spring recesses, Thanksgiving Day, February twenty-second, and May thirtieth, *open free*.

(a) To the public: week-days, 9 to 5; Sundays, 2.30 to 4.30.

(b) To students of the department: as above, and Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons until 6.

From Commencement until the opening of college, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 10 to 12; 2 to 4.

DOCENT SERVICE

Short talks in the special exhibition room are given on Sundays at 3 p. m. and 4 p. m.; guidance through the galleries may be had at other times by appointment with any member of the department.

Exhibitions supplementary to courses in other departments will be arranged in the building at any time. Application should be made to the museum assistant.

PUBLIC LECTURES

Several illustrated talks by lecturers not in the department are offered each season. These are announced in the Smith College Bulletin, and are usually open to the public without charge.

SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

The regular collections are supplemented by loan exhibitions lasting about three weeks each. Those scheduled for 1922-1923 include Italian, French and American paintings, prints, new acquisitions, and students' work.

BULLETIN

The present pamphlet is the fourth number of the Smith College Bulletin to be devoted to the Hillyer Gallery. A similar issue will appear annually.

APPLICATION TO COPY

Application to copy or photograph any object owned by the museum must be made and filed at the Director's office. Photographs so made cannot be offered for sale to the public.

MEMBERSHIP

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP	\$ 5.00
FOR ALUMNAE AND FACULTY	2.50
SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP	10.00
LIFE MEMBERSHIP	100.00

All members receive the *Bulletin*.

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